



PRESENTATION PACKAGE



P.O. Box 1198, Halesowen, West Midlands B63 3LJ.

Telephone: 021-[REDACTED] (24hrs)

501-2849

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TYPEWRITERS
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ARK

Ark first came to our attention when they made their Marquee debut as support to the Huw Lloyd Langton Band (Jan 17, 1988). Most impressed we were and grabbed singer Tony Short and Guitar synth player Steve (professor) Harris just after their performance.

First things first first, - the performance... Ark, who are they? Well some of the Hawkfens were hoping it was Arc the band connected with Harvey Bainbridge, but us London area people had obviously been missing something... Judging by the coachload of fanatics from various parts of the country such as Birmingham and Milton Keynes. There was a buzz before they hit the stage, and it soon became clear why these people had made the journey. Something is stirring and the irony of the fact that Marillion are charging ten pounds a ticket over at Hammersmith tonight and "Kev&Shaz" are going cause they heard the last single down the disco. A perfect night for Ark to warm up the Marquee... for warm it up they did with some very English prog! - Ha! it won't go away, just as the press think its on the run out come the new wave and Ark join Jadis, Weo Goran, Comedy of Errors,.....

Ark are a very powerful band, a very British band, their use of the guitar-synth along with the lead guitar gives them a lot of scope, - sometimes coming over with the twin guitar attack of Thin Lizzy. The use of the flute combined with some tasty Celtic drum rhythms gives them an occasional folky feeling. Anthony Short's stage manner reminded me of the old music hall or maybe a market trader in a strange way, sometimes nerves showed, but he has a personality and he comes over very well. His make up lacked a little bit, if your going to use make up... DO IT!

The music drives on, very powerful, - "Monkey On A Stick" was a high and closed the set with class, with a good healthy part of the the crowd, not just the traveling fans calling for an encore. Prog is alive and looking up as the time chages and our feet bounce with delight. There are one or two moments when it slips "Comunication" for instace lacks any balls, but then there are moments like "Feed The Fire" with guitars using the spaces inbetween the notes and sounds. When the Marquee choral society learns the words its going to be great. They have some well crafted moment and on only one occasion did they sound anything like Marillion so don't let the press fool you, we are proggin towards the nineties bounce bounce. Ark have the seeds of something.....

ARK



Edwards 1987 Battle Of The Rock Bands Final

So this is it - the big one for the three groups involved. After 8 months of hard slogging the stage is set for the final. The three finalists draw the straws, and coincidentally play in alphabetical order: Ark, Fayre Warning, Slowburner.

They are competing for the title, a weeks recording at Rich Bitch studios, a BRMB session courtesy of Robin Valk (also one of tonights judges), and a lot of press in the Mail, Metal Forces and, of course, Brum Beat.

First on are Ark and the speed at which this group have picked up fans has been phenomenal. For 2 years no City centre venue would let them play, now they're clamouring for them! Probably the tightest band on the club/college circuit they have a unique sound due to incorporating guitar synth and flute in their set up. Definitely an English band, the group stating they would never bow to the wishes of others and play cliched Yank style rock. The nearest comparison is a very heavy Marillion, with the emphasis on the guitars rather than the keyboards. They raced through a varied 45 minutes set that earned the biggest applause of the night.

Next were Fayre Warning. Last month I praised them for their sheer energy and effort but tonight was very much an off night. Perhaps it was the pressure of the final but more mistakes were made in their three quarters of an hour than I've seen them make all year, with bassist Mark Vance in particular ruining the group's chances. I'm sure they'll get over this disappointment though and expect to see more of them nationally soon - especially when guitarist Ralph Cordell, good though he is, stops ripping off the Freebird solo on Riding High/Back To You.

Last on were Slowburner

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RUNRIG/ARK ASTON UNIVERSITY G Birmingham

Runrig are what The Proclaimers be when they grow up and Country would doubtless kill band as potent as the high Scotland from whence they Ark, on the other hand are progressives, rabble rousing would-be's. Sadly, they will if very big rather soon. So if follow the bouncing balls it well be theirs.

Stu

On the singles front Ark finally release their excellent Mike Ivory-produced 'Home For the Summer' (AMA) for those who've cherished the folkish prog rock inspired demos.

up that I've got a lot for. Paul, the vocalising such power in songs he carries the through with flying. Not that they're at all, coz these dudes can kick some riffs out between. Standout was 'Black' full of emotion and ing with blues. Well ved by all there, a that will go far.

result was pretty ctible as Ark captu- ne honours with 4 out 5 judges, with Slow- er putting up the stiff- resistance as Fayre ing trailed in third. ult that satisfied the rity of the packed nce and I'm sure I d judge and fellow Beater Andrew Cox ing Communications left in a slightly drun- up-or-courtesy of Ark song) and Edwards ree booze). dentally entries are being taken for the competition. Give me on 021 - 643 5835. rs. Dave Juste.



Birmingham Indoor Rock Festival report by HOWARD JOHNSON and PAUL MILLER. Pix KATIA NATOLA and IAN JACOBS

ARK (WHO I have the strangest feeling may have once been called Damascus) have the unenviable task of opening up this all-day Metal bash.

Obviously a popular act in the Midlands despite being what is commonly known as prog-rockers. Hopelessly out of date and out of synch with current trends, they nevertheless admirably avoided the obvious temptation to perform a series of ten-minute epics.

Straining my ears I could detect traces of Jethro Tull, Focus and the much-missed Grace amongst the hour-long set (with USI having pulled out for reasons unknown it meant that the bands at the bottom end of the bill got to play longer) and, I must confess, I found it all rather enjoyable.

With a voice that sounded like a cross between Fish and Chemical Alice's Andy Grant and insisting on painting his face, early Marillion was also gonna be an obvious comparison but, although the likes of 'Kaleidoscope' and the sombre opening to 'Flag Day' did betray that influence, others, like 'Communications' for instance, were far more sprightly and less backward-looking.

Ark were by far the best of the minnows and scored a healthy ten out of ten on the Millerometer for having a sound engineer with Blood Feast T-Shirt on. PM

ARK: 'Communications' (AMA)

Ark are highly rated by the lads from Birmingham's Edwards No.8 club, and hailed as one of the most popular bands in the region. Tony Short is on vocals, and although this is a low budget production, it shows promise; a sprightly Marillion-tinged performance with a tune that nags at the subconscious after repeated plays.

ARK**** "I'll tell you a tale of mortar and stone": A compelling, folkly narrative ballad, with clear-sounding, rippling guitar, a minor key and a sad, plaintive flute (which my Slavic blood loved). Apart from liking the number very much, I think that it could achieve an unexpected popularity on a broader scale, with various different types of audience "out there."

The Demo... ARK ... The Band

Like in the letter, I'm sitting in a 125. The difference is that this one is going to Gloucester and that I'm with Greg, Gavin, Carl and Philip. We're going to see ARK. There isn't much going on apart from Gavin eating Phillip's sandwiches, so I reflect as to why I like ARK. The demo they sent me ran to four tracks; the Scattering, Flag Day, Gaia, and The Teller. The Scattering has a distinct Irish feel, being about the vast amounts of people who left Ireland to find their fortunes in America. Yeah, that's right like The Proclaimers' song except rather better, and they don't wear stupid national health glasses or say "loook" in annoying accents. The song isn't the best on the tape, seeming to lose direction occasionally but it does achieve its objective in that it sounds very celtic. The drum rhythm plays a major role and at some points the vocals are almost on their own as far as tune is concerned, stressing the emphasis on the lyrics which the track requires. The lyrics also appear to be fairly good on Flag Day, but this track has much more melody behind it and has a much "fuller" feel. It also shows some nice flute parts and illustrates just how great their guitar-synth can sound.

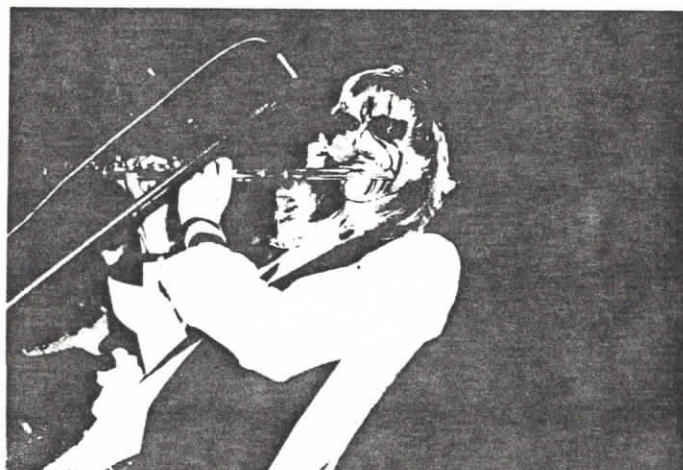
"Gaia" is wonderful, the sort of song that makes you want to jump up and down when you hear it at a gig. There's a lot of guitar work involved and the vocal line fits in perfectly; it is worth getting the

tape just for this track. (Between mouthfuls of food, Gavin tells me that Gaia was a pagan fertility goddess. Thanks Gav). "The Teller", like "The Scattering", has a distinctive folkly atmosphere, relying on two acoustic guitars and the occasional flute to back up the very prominent vocal line of the Tale. One almost sees the picture of a travelling minstrel when listening to this; Duncan tells me that this is his favourite track on the tape. I would disagree, but then that just goes to show how our tastes can differ.

Eventually we get off the train and, after a breif stop for Gavin to buy himself a couple of beefburgers, we find The Man In The Boulder Hat - a sort of Yuppie pub with mock pine panelling on all the walls. We wait. And wait. No sign of ARK. We Wait. Gavin buys himself a beefburger.

Apparently there was a crash on the M5 and the band were held up for a couple of hours on their way down from Birmingham. This is a pity because the last train leaves at 9:55 - still we have the time for a brief chat with guitarist, Pete Wheatley (the other members of ARK are; Tony Short - vocals and flute, Steve Harris - guitar-synth, David Robins - drums. The band have recently acquired a new bassist whose name I don't know.)

The band, says Pete, have been together for about three years - although their original name was DAMASCUS, "We try to play English rock music with the emphasis on English," he continues. "These days there are so many bands pretending to be American." And what about the Irish feel on the demo? "Well, with that particular demo we decided to give it a sort of 'feel', rather than just put down four completely unrelated tracks. With other demos we've tried to be commercial for the record companies, whereas that was much more of us"





ARK CV 1988
P.O. BOX 1198
HALESOWEN

DRY DOCK
MANAGEMENT
TEL: 021-501-2849

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ARK ARE:-

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JOHN "JOLLYMAN" JOWITT
BASS GUITAR, BACKING VOCALS.

GARY DAVIES
DRUMS, PERCUSSIONS.

ANTHONY SHORT
VOCALS, FLUTE.

PETER WHEATLEY
LEAD GUITAR, BACKING VOCALS.

DAVID "WULFY" AVERY
TECHNICAL AND PERSONAL
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**ARK's FAN CLUB "THE FAMILY" HAS SPREAD INTO EUROPE
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WOLFSBANE/STARFIGHTERS/TLT/
MARSHALL LAW/REBEL/TOTALY
SUSPECT/SLOW BURNER/ARK
Birmingham Rockfest
Goldwyns Suite, Birmingham

11 o'clock in the morning. A time when most godfearing folk would be relishing the comfort of their beds on a bank holiday morning. The Rockfest, however, drew them forth out of their flea-ridden pits in their denim droves. The first Birmingham indoor rock festival's inauguration ceremony began with inceptors ARK in unison with 700 rock fans and at its heady peak (during the STARFIGHTERS set) this number rose to an awesome 1300 plus. British rock dead? Someone obviously forgot to tell Birmingham!

Regrettably this overall success was marred by a distinct and annoying lack of record company reps. Stupidity? Ignorance? Laziness? I think the answer can only be yes on all three counts.

I guarantee you will never have the opportunity to witness this much talent on one bill ever again. The cream of British rock totally annihilated any misconceptions that have been eagerly fuelled by the British music industry's obtuse and downright dangerous recent policies. British rock is alive, thriving and sporting a dirty great hard on. It's never been healthier!

ARK are nothing like MARILLION. I say this because of the constant and cruel comparisons. Collating ARK and MARILLION is a ridiculous exercise in the extreme for ARK are everything MARILLION, PALLAS, IQ, TWELFTH NIGHT are not and would dearly love to be. ARK are exciting, fresh, vibrant and laden down with a monstrous degree of natural talent in all departments, but what makes them so unique is that they employ this boundless energy in whatever so direction they choose. In short, they take risks, they dare to be different - they're the only truly progressive band out of all those thus far mentioned. ARK recognize no musical boundaries and can slip quite happily from lilting medieval folk to excessive power chords. ARK ignore the rules and utilize everything at their disposal.

There are minor gripes naturellement, the face paint I deem unnecessary and slightly precocious. I just think ARK are way beyond such antics, they don't need it. I also feel just a little concerned at the use of a stuffed ape as a stageprop during "Monkey On A Stick" but the crowd dig it so who am I to complain?

ARK's set is damn near perfect, deviating and twisting along the blatantly commercial pop powersurge of "Communications" to the technical intoxication of "L'Ark" and onto the nearest thing I've heard to a rightful number one this year, the gorgeous "Through The Night", a tune of prime JOURNEY pedigree but with that necessary ARK spice to distinguish it. Pete Wheatley's guitar solo was particularly impressive, reminiscent of SAGA's Ian Crichton. So how does one define the ARK sound? It's so diverse and fluid that nailing it down completely is an impossible task. The essential basis of ARK is the guitar/guitar synth interplay that demands constant attention. This, allied with a rhythm section that refuses to stay in the shadows and constantly surprises, gives vocalist Tony Short vivid splash of background colour with which to paint his captivating and often poignant lyrics.

ARK are the complete package, I advise all devotees of MARILLION to check them out. I predict a pleasant shock! Oh, by the way, the crowd loved it.

GARRY SHARPE

TAKEN FROM
"METAL FORCES"
JUNE 88.

**Ark
'The Dreams Of Mr. Jones'
A.M. Records (AMA 0102)

Just picture the scene down at some pub in Halesowen. Ark are knocking back the lager shandies, with a look of pathological hatred about them. All because some utter ***** at Metal Hammer couldn't manage to review their album without mentioning Marillion, Twisted Night, I.Q. and worst of all Genesis, in the most bloody paragraph! Sorry guys. Guilty as charged. The only defence being, well what would you do when faced with an album where the lead singer wants to be Genesis era Peter Gabriel so bad he goes to work at the local McDonald's wearing not the regulation M uniform, but a bloody big flower costume? So why did I bestow four stars upon 'The Dreams Of Mr. Jones'?



On Halesowen High Street then? Well, I've got a sneaking affection for this kind of stuff. Loathe Genesis, y'understand! But I'm a sucker for the last two Marillion albums, so I'm prepared to give this the benefit of the doubt. They can play all right. As usual with prog-rock groups, they put far too high a value on musicianship, and not enough on feel and blind instinct. But that I can live with, as long as I can wallow in the last couple of numbers on side one, the slowies 'Through The Night' and 'Kaleidoscope'. Like the gloriously maudlin moments of 'Misplaced Childhood', this angst ridden tosh sweeps me away against my better instincts. My head says 'this is rubbish' but my heart says 'get good taste and just go for it'. I will most certainly be playing these two many a time in the early hours when, well you just can't get too sentimental with Slayer y'understand what I'm saying. I doubt Ark will thank me for

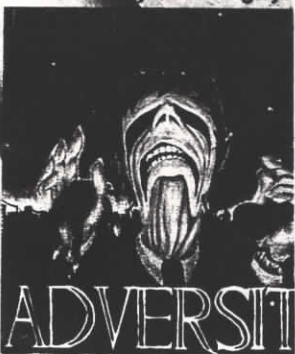
pigeon-holing them like this but they've brought it upon themselves, fact. But really, you should own a few albums like this, I know I do. They come in well handy, cause you never know when you'll want to whip the Exodus album off and tune in to something a little more thoughtful. I've already played 'Through The Night' more times than most of the thrash albums I've sung the praises of this year, and for this quite beautiful track alone, despite the crappy speeding up bit at the end, I'll gladly wish Ark all the luck in the world.

MARK DAY

**ADVERSITY
Lost It All**

**Music Ears Records (I)
13**

Hardcore can sometimes pound your head to a pulp, leaving you wondering why you took the risk, but albums like 'Lost It All' their way into your system. You know why Adversity, come from Vancouver, Canada have come up with seriously good, but fun, releasing a full-on, sizzling, single, thought-provoking and rare ingredients actual quality. These guys



play, consist of aggressive, churned out, an alarm rate and you cannot help be impressed. Crossover like this is becoming more difficult to amongst the ever increasing mass of hardcore bands, but pinning around on stage vinyl at the moment. It makes it that much more exciting. Adversity play a precious blend of metal guitars slicing in and out, walls of rhythm, chuggi hammering and heavy, but weight never drags you down. The pace of Brendan's drive

**ARK: 'Communications'
(AMA)**

Ark are highly rated by the lads from Birmingham's Edwards No.8 club, and hailed as one of the most popular bands in the region. Tony Short is on vocals, and although this is a low budget production, it shows promise; a sprightly Marillion-tinged performance with a tune that nags at the subconscious after repeated plays.

LIVE ON

**ARK
J.B.s, DUDLEY
September 8**

It's been six months since last saw Ark. At the time they were faced with the daunting task of opening Birmingham Rock festival. They went down a storm then, playing to a bleary eyed bunch of enthusiastic rockers at 11 am on a Bank Holiday Monday, a time when most self respecting people would be fast asleep in their pits, let alone 150 miles from home.

Ark were not faced with such a difficult situation this time, and they gave the home crowd everything they'd got. As the intro faded and the lights cut through the smoke, filling the small club with an air of anticipation, the band steamed into 'Gaia'. The thudding bass of John Jowitt and the powerful cutting chords of Steve Harris (guitar synth), and Peter Wheatley's powerful guitar, got the faithful fans, all clad in black Ark T-shirts, leaping up and down and generally going ape.

It was at this point that singer and flute player Anthony Short sprang into action. It's through Mr. Short that Ark get their undeserved tag of being Marillion/Genesis clones. Admittedly Anthony does sound similar to Peter Gabriel and when covered in greasepaint, he does slightly resemble Fish. But when you listen to his voice, and Ark's music, there is something there which makes them very British and very much their men. At least they play sensibly short songs and not three hour epics.

Ark played debut single 'Communications', 'Kaleidoscope', 'Powder For The Gun' (which went down extremely well), and 'Through The Night', a beautiful ballad, which was greeted with cheers.

Ark are in a make or break situation. The chances of this band doing very well for themselves are high. They have great songs and their stage performance captures the imagination from the outset. On the other hand they may disappear into the wild blue yonder, through no fault of their own, just the brainwashed attitude many A&R men have to progressive rock. Don't fall into the trap. See them, buy their album and make up your own mind.

STEVE SCHOFIELD

74 METAL HAMMER



**JOHN SLATER
BMRB RADIO
Birmingham and the Midlands
96.4 FM and 1152 AM
Mondays to Thursdays 7-10pm
Sunday 3-5pm**



1) MOST PLAYED TRACK(S): An album called 'The Dreams Of Mr. Jones' by local band Ark.

2) BEST RECENT GIG: Prince at Birmingham NEC.

3) FAVOURITE TOP 40 RECORD: 'Revolution Babe' by Transvision Vamp.

John (who recently appeared as Jon Bon Jovi in a poster advertising campaign) is keen to point out that his show is not a specialist rock show — indeed, BMRB doesn't feature such a slot — but he does play as much mainstream rock as he sees fit. Tune in during the above hours and you're more than likely to get an earful of Bon Jovi's 'Bad Medicine', Europe's 'Superstitious' or Guns n' Roses' 'Sweet Child O' Mine' alongside more traditional pop fare.

A popular part of John's show is the section in which he broadcasts 30-40 minutes of live performances by a wide variety of artists. Already featured have been Magnum, Gary Moore and T'Pau.

"There's quite a lot happening on the local scene," he comments, adding that there's been no high-level opposition to his inclusion of plenty of rock, and that it's a shame the station in the town that gave us Judas Priest and Black Sabbath doesn't have a specialist rock show. Quite so.



ARK

c/o DRY DOCK MANAGEMENT
P.O. BOX 1198
HALESOWEN
WEST MIDLANDS. B63 3LJ

Tel: 021-501-2849

With Compliments

